

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: COUNTY CLERK - MOTOR VEHICLES (Including Historian)

DATE: AUGUST 27, 2007

Committee Members Present:

Supervisors Kenny
Belden
Sheehan
Bentley
O'Connor

Others Present:

Pamela Vogel, County Clerk
Jody Ross, Deputy County Clerk
Hal Payne, Commissioner, Administrative &
Fiscal Services
JoAnn McKinstry, Deputy Commissioner,
Administrative & Fiscal Services
Joan Sady, Clerk, Board of Supervisors
Supervisor Caimano, Budget Officer
Supervisor Geraghty
Katy Goodman, Secretary to the Clerk

Mr. Kenny called the meeting of the County Clerk- Motor Vehicles (Including Historian) Committee to order at 9:35 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk.

Mr. Kenny stated the primary purpose of the meeting was to review the proposed 2008 Budgets for the County Clerk's Office. He noted there were four Budgets under the County Clerk's purview. He stated the Budgets were for the County Historian (A.7510), the County Clerk (A.1410), Public Records (A.1665) and Records Management (A.1460). Copies of the proposed Budgets were distributed to the Committee members and copies are on file with the minutes.

Mr. Kenny invited the Committee members to review the Historian's Budget request and to ask Pam Vogel, County Clerk, any questions they might have about it. He noted the Budget request was essentially the same as it was last year.

Ms. Vogel apprised the 2008 Historian's proposed Budget request was \$10,979, as compared to the 2007 appropriations of \$10,894, an increase of \$85. Mr. Caimano noted in the .4's Contractual Expenses Budget code for Supplies (A.410 object code) the request was for \$100, as compared to the actual expenditure of \$14 in 2006. Ms. Vogel responded there was a new Historian and she did not know what the supplies expenses would be.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously to approve the Historian's Budget (A.7510), as presented, and to authorize the Committee Chairman to sign it and forward it to the Budget Officer.

The County Clerk's (A.1410) Budget was discussed next. Mr. Kenny advised this was the largest of the County Clerk - Department of Motor Vehicles' Budgets. Ms. Vogel stated the total proposed 2008 County Clerk's Budget request was \$704,496, as compared to the 2007 appropriations of \$689,705, an increase of \$14,791.

Mr. Kenny apprised the largest increase in the Budget line items was the \$15,000 in the .2's Equipment request. He explained the request reflected the costs to update the counter in the Department of Motor Vehicles' section of the County Clerk's Office. Mr. Kenny stated the counter had been in use since 1963 and the plan had been to replace it for the past five years. He advised it was no longer possible to use the counter and he briefly described one of the problems with it for the information of the Committee members. Mr. Kenny stated the counters would be a combination of components built by the County's Buildings and Grounds staff and manufactured modular units. He advised the work would be done over a weekend because the Department had to remain open to the public during the week.

Mr. Kenny stated they were very careful with the estimate of the revenues in this Budget in view of the mortgage tax decline. He explained although the dollar amount of the estimated revenues was up, that was due to the large land sale by the Finch Pruyn Company and there was a sixteen percent decline in the number of mortgages filed in the County Clerk's Office this year. Mr. Kenny noted that trend would continue. The 2008 estimated revenues' request was \$2,230,000, as compared to the 2007 appropriations of \$2,190,000, an increase of \$40,000.

Mr. Caimano noted at one time he had heard an increase in the mortgage tax was under consideration, and he asked if that was still in the works. Ms. Vogel noted the proposed Budget did not reflect any increase in the tax. However, she stated, some Counties had increased their mortgage tax, and she thought Essex County had increased its tax by one and-a-quarter percent this past year. She advised any increase would require the Committee's support. Mr. Caimano questioned if the State would have to approve an increase; and Ms. Vogel replied she was not sure. Mr. Kenny said he thought that was correct. Ms. Vogel advised the County had raised the mortgage tax to one percent in 1999 and some information she had in her files seemed to indicate that the State would have to approve an increase. Mr. Caimano suggested the possibility of an increase in the mortgage tax be looked at as a way to increase the County's revenues.

Discussion ensued. Ms. Vogel apprised the aforementioned revenues reflected the twenty-five percent of the tax that remained with the County. She noted half of the tax collected went to the Towns. Ms. Vogel referred the Committee members to an outline of the Department's revenue sources which was included in the County Clerk's Budget package. She pointed out the figures for the number of mortgages filed for the period of August 1st through August 26th, 2006, as compared to those for the same period in 2007, showed the aforementioned decline. Ms. Vogel commented the figures changed every day and an increase could certainly be looked at. She stated when Mr. Kenny and she had discussed the Budget, they had projected the County's percentage would be \$1,150,000. Ms. Vogel noted if the tax was increased another twenty-five percent and the increase went to the County it would impact the Budget considerably. Mr. Kenny

apprised an increase would have the potential to raise another \$1 million in revenues. Mr. Belden recommended that an increase be looked at. Mr. Kenny stated there would be a Committee meeting in October and a possible increase in the mortgage tax could be discussed then.

Discussion ensued on the question of whether or not the revenues generated by the last increase in the mortgage tax were dedicated to a project at Adirondack Community College (ACC). Ms. Vogel advised she believed that was the way the revenues were originally set up. However, she stated, the revenues would be shown in the County Budget. Mr. Caimano recalled the funds went to the General Fund; however, he noted, that question should be reviewed. Mr. Caimano asked Hal Payne, Commissioner of Administrative and Fiscal Services, to look into the issue; and Mr. Payne acknowledged the request.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to approve the County Clerk's Budget (A.1410), as presented, and to authorize the Committee Chairman to sign it and forward it to the Budget Officer.

Mr. Kenny stated the next Budget review was for the Public Records (A.1665) Division of the County Clerk's Office. He apprised the proposed 2008 Budget request showed an increase of \$269, and noted that the total Budget request was \$206,045, as compared to the 2007 appropriations of \$205,776.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to approve the Public Records Budget (A.1665), as presented, and to authorize the Committee Chairman to sign it and forward it to the Budget Officer.

Ms. Vogel spoke on the Records Management (A.1460) proposed 2008 Budget and advised that the 2008 proposed Budget request was \$30,104, as compared to the 2007 appropriations of \$46,719, a decrease of \$16,615. Ms. Vogel explained the Budget reflected the 2007-2008 Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund (LGRMIF) grant from the State. She noted that the Department had applied for these grants since the early 1990's and most of the time they had been awarded either 100 percent or almost 100 percent of the amounts that were applied for. Ms. Vogel explained the differences between the appropriations and expenditures was because each project funded by the grants had different costs and the grant year was July 1st through June 30th. She apprised the total grant award for the 2007-2008 grant year was \$60,208 and the \$30,104 would be the portion that would be expended in 2008.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to approve the Records Management (A.1460) Budget, as presented, and to authorize the Committee Chairman to sign it and forward it to the Budget Officer.

Mr. Belden thanked Ms. Vogel for her hard work in securing these grants over the years. Ms. Vogel acknowledged the remarks.

Discussion returned to the County Clerk's Budget. Mr. Kenny stated that Mr. Payne had noticed there was a request to increase the part-time salaries from \$5,000 to \$6,000. A copy of a Requested Salary Changes for 2008 form was included in the County Clerk's Budget package. Ms. Vogel explained she had requested the funds because she would like to have part-time assistance in the Department of Motor Vehicles during peak periods and vacation and sick leave times. In particular, she explained, she would like to have staff available to cover the express and welcome windows during lunch times. Ms. Vogel noted they were not always able to cover the windows during the lunch periods.

Mr. Caimano commented all of the Department's proposed Budgets showed decreases. He expressed his support for the request to increase the part-time salaries. Mr. Belden concurred.

Mr. Payne referred to the Records Management Budget request on Page 1 of the Budget Worksheet Report. He stated under the .1's Personal Services account, \$4,500 was shown under the .110 object code - Salaries - Regular and it should be shown under the Salaries - Part -Time .130's object code. Ms. Vogel concurred, and she said she would change the Budget request accordingly.

Dialogue ensued between Mr. Payne and Ms. Vogel on the revenues for the Records Management Budget. Mr. Payne queried on the decrease in the revenues between 2007 and the 2008 request. Ms. Vogel reiterated that the grant amounts were specific to various projects and they were divided according to the grant year which covered two different years. She confirmed for Mr. Payne that the revenues were not declining steadily from the amounts that were being requested.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion by Mr. Belden, and seconded by, Mr. O'Connor, Mr. Kenny adjourned the meeting at 9:51 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Katy Goodman, Secretary to the Clerk